

Nettlestone Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118161
Local Authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	312827
Inspection dates	21–22 May 2008
Reporting inspector	David Marshall

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan Cousins
Headteacher	Mrs Caroline de Belder
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2005
School address	Nettlestone Seaview PO34 5DY
Telephone number	01983 613171
Fax number	01983 616663

Age group	4–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Nettlestone Primary is a smaller than average first school, serving the villages of Seaview and Nettlestone and the neighbouring town of Ryde. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average - as is the number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Over 95% of pupils are of White British ethnic origin, which is above the national average. The children usually join the school from the on-site Chatterbox Nursery, and other nursery and playgroups in Ryde. The school has achieved the Enhanced Healthy Schools Award, the information and communication technology (ICT) Mark, the Basic Skills Award and the Activemark for physical education provision.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Nettlestone is a good school. This is due to the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the overall efficiency of the management and the outstanding quality of pastoral care provided for pupils. A very supportive atmosphere for learning exists that ensures the pupils make good progress and achieve well. As one parent wrote, and;quot;Nettlestone primary is a fantastic school and I feel privileged to be sending my children there. Good behaviour and manners are instilled and it shows in all children. This school rocks!'

Reception children start with skills and understanding that are in line with, or just above, expectations for their age. They get a good start to their education and achieve very well. By the time, they enter Year 1 they are very confident and have excellent relationships with one another. Thanks to the care shown by all adults, pupils of all abilities continue to make good progress throughout the school. Careful analysis and planning enables pupils consistently to reach well above average standards in national tests. By the time pupils leave school, records show they achieve well above expectations for their age. Pupils with learning difficulties benefit from well focused support and make good progress; most attain average standards.

Teaching and learning are good and many lessons really sparkle. Observations and assessments of what the pupils know and can do are collected well and shared with all concerned. Lessons are well planned and based on trying to make sure that all pupils enjoy learning. However, the school is working hard to address the inconsistencies in the progress the pupils make as they move through the school. This is because of the variation in the quality of teaching. In most classes, teachers' presentation is lively and moves learning along at a good pace. The appropriateness of the work offered to pupils in these lessons is very good, but these best features are not always seen in all classes. Occasionally, the teaching, although satisfactory, does not provide consistent challenge. On these very few occasions, pupils' progress slows. By providing good quality help from very well qualified teaching assistants wherever it is needed, the least able and most vulnerable pupils make very good progress.

The excellent climate for learning enables pupils to achieve an outstanding standard of personal development. Pupils are cared for exceptionally well and all of them, including the most vulnerable, are safe and secure. The rich curriculum covers all subjects well. It has been amended recently to provide exciting challenges throughout the school. Commendably, staff constantly review the delivery of the curriculum so as to ensure pupils are enthused. The curriculum is enhanced by a very good range of additional activities.

The headteacher provides first-rate leadership. She is very ably supported by the assistant headteacher. All staff and developments are driven forward at a good pace. Strengths and weaknesses are speedily identified because the school has good systems for monitoring its work, in which the governing body plays a key role. Teamwork is excellent. The school has improved significantly from its sound position at the time of the last inspection. The capacity to continue to improve is excellent.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

There is good provision in the Foundation Stage. The staff plan enjoyable and challenging activities for the children. These give the children a real sense of determining their own way forward whilst guaranteeing their full involvement in all activities. Children thoroughly enjoy

school. The room available is stimulating and resources are well used. A very calm and purposeful atmosphere is created where the children are already making very good progress. At the moment, the area available for the children to play and learn outside is very limited, and places a restriction on the opportunities available. The coordinator has very good plans in place to provide a covered, all-weather area. The school acknowledges that this is a priority. Staff get to know the children very well and receive very good support from the teaching assistants whenever it is needed. Careful note is made of all responses and feedback and the information collected is used particularly well to ensure that the least able and most vulnerable settle well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use the school's current systems for sharing best practice to increase the quantity of good and outstanding teaching.
- Put into effect the existing plans to provide a suitable outside area for the Foundation Stage.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Throughout the school, pupils achieve well. By the time they start in Year 1 they have achieved expected levels in all areas of learning. The school has successfully focused on maintaining standards at the end of Key Stage 1. The number of pupils achieving the expected levels in the last five years has consistently been well above average levels. The detailed school tracking shows that the pupils in Year 4 who have been in the school since the Reception class have made very good progress. Standards in the current Year 4 are above expectations for the age of the pupils, due almost exclusively to the very high quality of the teaching they receive in this year group. However, it is also clear from the school's assessment information that pupils' progress varies according to the class they are in.

Because of the enthusiasm and availability of staff, pupils also acquire a high level of skill and understanding in music and ICT by the time they leave school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils speak glowingly of all the school does for them. They have excellent attitudes to learning. Pupils demonstrate their high level of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by the way they value one another, listen attentively to different views, raise funds to support charities and welcome opportunities to learn about the wider world. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils love coming to school and their attendance is above average. Pupils express their ideas clearly and enjoy the opportunities to be involved in decision making. They are very positive about how the staff respond to their needs and enjoy being school council members and playground buddies. The pupils make an excellent contribution to the local and wider communities, joining in many events. They are very knowledgeable about how to keep healthy and safe, and take a great pride in their school garden. Pupils eagerly join in the many and varied extra-curricular sporting and musical activities. They are excellently prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall. In Reception the teacher uses his knowledge about how young children learn to plan activities that are exciting, enjoyable and relevant to their needs. Consequently, they become confident learners, ready to take on future challenges. Throughout the school, teachers manage pupils well and relationships are excellent. Teachers put their subject knowledge and questioning strategies to good use to extend pupils' learning and challenge their thinking. The fun pupils in Year 4 had in using their good ICT skills to focus on recycling and saving energy is typical of how pupils enjoy and are involved in their learning in the best lessons. Most teachers have high expectations, which are reflected in books where pupils' work is presented well. However, not all good practice is sufficiently shared by staff. Marking of pupils' work is effective in providing them information about how well they have done and what they need to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Staff have worked very hard and have devised a creative and stimulating curriculum that provides effectively for the needs of all pupils. They have introduced innovative ways to promote pupils' learning by making links between different subjects. In particular, provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and music are outstanding. The singing is both tuneful and enthusiastic, and a large number of pupils learn orchestral instruments and perform in many concerts. An outstanding Year 2 PSHE lesson enabled pupils to support each other, share their thoughts on making hard decisions and showed just how successful this planning can be. Much of this curriculum provision is new and there are still variations in how effectively teachers are implementing this planning. The school have been careful to share their amended planning with parents, one of whom wrote, 'The school provides a stimulating and creative learning environment in which our child seems to flourish whether in or out of the classroom'. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, are given very good support through their individual planning, which enables them to achieve extremely well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides a safe, enjoyable and secure environment, reflecting the high priority it gives to the care, guidance and support of pupils. Pastoral care therefore is outstanding. Policies and procedures to safeguard pupils are embedded and understood by all staff. Pupils say they are happy to talk to teachers if they are sad. One summed it up, 'I look forward to seeing my teacher and being friends with everyone'. Pupils' academic guidance is outstanding. The reviewed system that analyses pupils' learning of units of work and the key skills to be learned has added extra rigor to the process. This tracking of pupils' actual learning is enabling the curriculum to be accurately focused on precisely what pupils need to learn or practice. Pupils are also more involved in their own learning by evaluating their progress against their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The very experienced headteacher's leadership is excellent, and with the outstanding skills of the assistant headteacher, they make an impressive team. All staff follow their lead and teamwork is an aspect stressed by all in the school. The administrative team are considerable assets to the school and are very much appreciated by all concerned. One way in which everyone follows the headteacher's exemplary lead is to relate extremely effectively with all pupils, parents and the local community. Partnerships are outstanding. Management at all levels is good and strongly committed to the continuing professional development of staff. This is reflected in their drive to continue to improve the consistency of teaching and learning and do their very best for all pupils. There is a good understanding of the strengths of the school and areas that need more development through the good school improvement plan. The excellent governing body bring a wide range of skills to bear to act as critical friends, challenging decisions and requesting explanations where this is judged to be necessary.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

09 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nettlestone Primary School, Seaview, PO34 5DY

Thank you for making me so welcome and sharing with me your thoughts and feelings about school. You obviously thoroughly enjoy school and contribute much in making the school successful. I think you go to a good school, and your behaviour, positive attitudes to work and play and the ways in which you care for one another are outstanding.

The school is a caring place and the staff work hard to make learning fun. The teaching is good and the curriculum also helps to make learning interesting. I was very impressed by your enthusiasm for all of the extra activities you join in and for the sensible way you discuss your work. The school is well organised and your headteacher and the staff make sure that everything runs smoothly. You play your part well in making decisions through the school council.

The staff have some very good plans in place to build an outside area for the Reception class. I have asked them to see if they can use these plans so that there is somewhere for the youngest of you to enjoy learning together outside. I have also asked your teachers to make sure that no matter which class you are in all your lessons are as good as most of them are. In turn, you must carry on listening carefully and take note of what your teacher says. Then you will all continue to make really good progress in your learning.

I wish you all the very best.

Yours sincerely

David Marshall

Lead Inspector